

## August 30, 2006 - Slaughter Demands Tomlinson's Dismissal from Broadcasting Board

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, August 30, 2006

**Slaughter Demands Tomlinson's Dismissal from Broadcasting Board**  
Latest Scandals Follow History of Abuse and Misuse of Funds While Chief of Corporation for Public Broadcasting

Washington, DC - Rep. Louise M. Slaughter (D-NY-28) today called on the Bush Administration to immediately remove former Corporation of Public Broadcasting (CPB) Chief Ken Tomlinson from the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). The BBG oversees all of the government's foreign broadcasting operations, making Mr. Tomlinson one of the top administration officials in charge of public diplomacy.

She further called on the President to eliminate any chance Mr. Tomlinson could be reappointed as BBG chairman by withdrawing his name from pending Senate consideration.

Rep. Slaughter's remarks came in response to today's reports that while at the BBG, Mr. Tomlinson abused his position and defrauded taxpayers by using government resources for work entirely unrelated to his official duties - including running a thoroughbred racing stable out of his office.

"The very idea that Mr. Tomlinson was allowed to remain in a position of such influence after his disgraceful tenure at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is an insult to the American taxpayers who pay his salary," Rep. Slaughter said. "It shows how resistant the Administration is to purging corruption from its ranks."

"The latest scandal concerning Mr. Tomlinson is not an isolated incident," Rep. Slaughter said. "He was ousted from the CPB after showing a callous disregard for public service by repeatedly attempting to politicize public broadcasting. Today's revelations are just the latest example of Mr. Tomlinson's pattern of abuse and misgovernment while in public service."

Mr. Tomlinson was forced to resign last year from the board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting after the CPB inspector general found he had used "agency money to hire consultants and lobbyists without notifying the agency's board," among various other offenses.

"Unless our government agencies are run by officials who put the well-being of the American people first, instead of handing them to special interests and blatant ideologues, bad policy and corrupt governance will continue to be what most individuals associate with this White House and this Republican Leadership," Rep. Slaughter concluded.

## BACKGROUND

**TOMLINSON USED A TOP GOVERNMENT OFFICE TO RUN A HORSE RACING STABLE AND REWARD HIS FRIENDS:** A new report by State Department investigators reveals that while chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), Tomlinson has "improperly and extensively used his office at the broadcasting board for nongovernmental work," including using it to operate a horse racing operation, giving a friend a lucrative job, using government employees to run personal errands for him, and billing the government for more days of work than is allowed under official guidelines. The BBG oversees all of the government's foreign broadcasting operations, making Tomlinson

one of the top administration officials in charge of public diplomacy. Tomlinson served on the board of the BBG's predecessor with Karl Rove in the 1990's, and has been chair of the BBG since 2002. His renomination as chair is pending before the Senate. [Stephen Labaton, "Broadcast Chief Misused Office, Inquiry Reports," New York Times, 8/30/06]

Tomlinson Illegally Pressured TV Stations to Air More Programs that Reflected His and the Bush Administration's Political Views: Although federal law prohibits the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) from making the funds it distributes to Public Broadcasting System (PBS) stations dependent on their programming decisions, the CPB's Inspector General last year concluded that former Chairman Kenneth Tomlinson did just that. The report found that Tomlinson, a Bush appointee and personal friend of Karl Rove, illegally interfered with PBS programming by promoting the costly conservative talk show, "The Journal Editorial Report," and threatening to withhold funds if PBS executives did not take the show. [Office of Inspector General Kenneth A. Konz, "Review of Alleged Actions Violating The Public Broadcasting Act of 1967, as Amended," Corporation for Public Broadcasting Office of Inspector General, 11/15/05. Available at: [http://www.cpb.org/oig/reports/602\\_cpb\\_ig\\_reportofreview.pdf](http://www.cpb.org/oig/reports/602_cpb_ig_reportofreview.pdf)]

Tomlinson Spent Taxpayer Money to Spy on PBS: Without authorization of the CPB board, Tomlinson also secretly contracted an unqualified "consultant" to review the objectivity of "NOW with Bill Moyers" and other supposedly biased shows on PBS and NPR. The study, which cost taxpayers \$14,000, categorized the shows' guests with labels such as "liberal," "conservative," "anti-Bush," and "pro-Bush," classifying conservative politicians like Sen. Chuck Hagel and former Rep. Bob Barr as "liberal" and "anti-administration" for briefly disagreeing with White House policy. [Paul Farhi, "CPB Liberal Bias Study Flawed, Critics Say," Washington Post, 7/1/05]

Tomlinson Illegally Worked to Put Bush Administration Political Appointees in Non-Partisan CPB Jobs: According to a report by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) inspector general, former CPB chair Kenneth Tomlinson violated the law by coordinating with the Bush White House to push out CPB President Kathleen Cox and replace her with Patricia Harrison, a former RNC co-chairwoman who passed Tomlinson's and the White House's "political test." Traditionally, the President/CEO is a nonpartisan expert in public broadcasting. Tomlinson also recommended White House official Mary C. Andrews for a senior advisor position, and she began working on implementing an ombudsmen program for CPB before she left the White House. [Stephen Labaton, "Spending Inquiry for Top Official on Broadcasting," New York Times, 11/5/05] Tomlinson selected the two ombudsmen without a formal search or bidding process. The Organization of News Ombudsmen denied CPB's ombudsmen full membership into their organization, citing concerns that their nomination appeared too political. [Katharine Q. Seelye, "Ombudsmen Rebuff Move by Public Broadcasting," New York Times, 5/30/05]

###